An tSeirbhís Chúirteanna
Courts Service

Courts Service
ICT, Digital and Data Strategy
2024 - 2027

CONTENTS

2024 — Maturing and expanding our accessible and user-centric digital, technology, and data services, through a culture of collaboration, consistency, and continuous improvement — 2027

1

1. INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

Context

The Courts Service continues to make progress towards its long-term strategic vision of supporting access to justice in a modern, digital Ireland. A core mechanism for accomplishing this is the Modernisation Programme, a strategic initiative aimed at redesigning services around the user and leveraging technology to streamline services and processes. The programme, launched in 2020, informed the previous ICT and Data Strategies 2021–2024, and continues to do so for this ICT, Digital and Data Strategy 2024–2027.

Over the last three years we have put in place many of the foundational aspects of the Modernisation Programme, with multiple key technology and infrastructure objectives realised through the delivery of committed actions in the ICT and Data Strategies 2021–2024. Having recognised a need to understand the ways in which Courts Service users interact with its services and systems, an extensive survey and interview process was conducted across the user base to identify issues faced and their overall levels of satisfaction with ICT services. This User Journey Mapping activity was completed in 2021 and revealed multiple fundamental technology-related issues that were resulting in a lower degree of satisfaction with ICT services. Resolving these was a core focus of the 2021–2024 ICT Strategy. A follow-up exercise was completed in 2024, which showed universal increases in ICT satisfaction among all user cohorts thanks to many changes that enabled better ways of working and a more positive experience.

The previous strategy initiatives included, but were not limited to, the expansion of our technology-enabled courtrooms with a consistency of available features, the introduction of modern end user devices along with collaboration and communication tools to enable better ways of working, and the introduction of an enhanced support model to effectively deliver our new desktop related services.

Our security posture is much improved, with multiple new security services now in place, including a Security Operations Centre (SOC), Security Information and Event Management (SIEM) service, a Network Detect and Response (NDR) service, and an Identity and Access Management (IAM) service. Together with the establishment of a Cyber Security Incident Response Plan (CSIRP), which outlines the roles and responsibilities of the Courts Service staff and external partners in a cyberattack, our security baseline compares favourably against the National Cyber Security Centre Cyber Security Baseline Standards. Paired with these security enhancements, improvements have been made to the Business Continuity Programme, which ensures

that the Courts Service can maintain or resume its critical functions in the event of a disruption or disaster. This included a complete re-design of our Disaster Recovery infrastructure, which is essential to the availability of the Courts data and applications. This has been supplemented with regular testing and training exercises to ensure the readiness and resilience of the Courts Service staff and systems.

Furthering the digital objectives of the Modernisation Programme, the Courts Service developed and launched the Unified Case Management System (UCMS), with an aim to provide a single, modern platform through which users can manage and engage with cases. Initially this included Assisted Decision-Making Capacity (ADMC) cases and has so far been further expanded through a back-office roll-out to all High Court staff as well as all Circuit Family offices across the country. This was followed by the launch of the pilot phase of the UCMS Portal, which gives participating law firms access to new online functionality for Circuit Family Divorce cases. Additionally, the prior strategy period saw the launch of the Digital Jury System, facilitating staff management of juries and enabling online responses to summonses from the public.

With regards to data, the last three years focused significant effort on the foundational work needed to provide data, reports and analytics of sufficient quality to inform decision-making and evidence-based policy making. In 2021 we carried out a Data Maturity Assessment which measured the level of data governance, literacy, quality, and analytics within the Courts Service, highlighting recommended actions for improvement. A follow-up Data Maturity Assessment completed in 2024 confirmed substantive improvements in this area. We have made available a significant quantity of dashboards and reports to aid the self-service analysis capabilities of Courts Service staff and the judiciary, enhanced by Business Intelligence tools. Moreover, we launched the Courts Service Open Data Portal, which provides access to anonymised and aggregated data on court activity. The portal aims to increase the transparency and trust of the public in the Courts system. The data programme has also delivered efficiencies in the area of data-sharing, as part of the Criminal Justice Operational Hub, for example the electronic delivery of charge sheets from An Garda Síochána.

Lastly, we have significantly enhanced the capabilities of the ICT Directorate and effectively increased internal capacity. This has been accompanied by the successful completion of several initiatives bringing about high performing blended, cross-functional teams composed of both internal and external staff. Within the ICT Directorate we have built a much-improved Service Design capability to support our efforts to more effectively manage and improve our delivered services. We have similarly made good progress in relation to governance, with a key highlight being the introduction of a Single Approach to Change, which in turn is delivering clearer change management processes and project management capability across the Courts Service.

Figure 1 shows a comprehensive view of the strategic actions from the prior strategy period, broken down by theme and status, with further details on the actions delivered in the Appendix under "Prior Strategy 2021-2024 Action Summary".

✓ **Achieved**   ✓ **Partially Achieved**   ⋯ Not Achieved

| Total Actions | 64 | ✓ 48 | ✓ 12 | ⋯ 4 |

Court Technology		
✓ 4	✓ 2	⋯ 1

Unified Case Management System		
✓ 3	✓ 2	⋯ 2

Desktop & Infrastructure Modernisation		
✓ 8	✓ 3	⋯ 0

Security		
✓ 9	✓ 0	⋯ 0

Capacity, Capability, and Governance		
✓ 6	✓ 1	⋯ 0

Data as an Enabler		
✓ 18	✓ 4	⋯ 1

Figure 1- Prior Strategy Action Summary

With significant progress having already been made, this ICT, Digital, and Data Strategy will continue to build on the foundations now in place and further expand on both the range and quality of our offered services. The strategic approach outlined in this document will be through the lens of six themes; of which four, Digital, Data, Security, and Technology, will be directly continuing the work done in the prior strategy period.

To prepare for the "Optimise" phase of the modernisation programme, two new themes, Quality of Service and Culture are focused around better equipping the ICT Directorate and the organisation for the sustainable long-term delivery of high-quality digital services. Working within our budgetary confines, we will work to deliver the array of strategic actions called out within these six themes. This will contribute significantly to the overarching strategic goals of the Courts Service, for example Digital First and those relating to climate and sustainability, moving away from a largely manual, paper-based organisation. The themes will be discussed in greater depth in their respective sections.

Approach to Strategy Creation

The contents of this Strategy were informed by a combination of extensive internal and external consultations, organisational plans and strategies, and alignment with broader public sector strategies and guidance. In the section below we outline key activities and actions which were taken during the strategy creation.

Internal Consultation

Extensive staff and judicial consultations took place in the form of a series of interviews and an in-depth survey to gauge the state of ICT services, a follow-on Data Maturity Assessment to gauge data maturity progress and inform future direction, and a request for input from the Chief Justice and Court Presidents for each of their respective courts. Much progress was identified over the previous strategic period and also a range of ideas and service gaps that helped the strategy creation process.

External Consultation

Feedback was sought from our partnering Public Service bodies, including the Department of Justice, Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, An Garda Síochána, the Legal Aid Board, Forensic Science Ireland, the Probation Service, and the Irish Prison Service. Requests for feedback were also shared with practitioners via the Bar of Ireland and the Law Society, and advocacy groups such as Safe Ireland, Pavee Point, Women's Aid, Men's Aid, Treoir, and One Family. A number of points were raised within responses, such as the need to ensure continued provision of traditional, non-digital channels for users of lower digital literacy, the need for essential supports for victims of domestic violence through remote hearings, and the need for enhanced data-sharing and improved digital services to improve efficiency.

Strategic Alignment

The creation of this strategy has been completed in alignment with other Courts Service, Justice and Public Service strategies, including the Courts Service Corporate Strategic Plan (2024–2027), the Courts Service Estates Strategy (2022–2025), the Courts Service 10-year Long-Term Strategic Vision (2020–2030), the Civil Service Renewal 2030 Strategy, the Connecting Government 2030: Digital and ICT Strategy for Ireland's Public Service (2022), Public Service Data Strategy (2019–2023) and the

2024

Maturing and expanding our accessible and user-centric digital, technology, and data services, through a culture of collaboration, consistency, and continuous improvement

2027

6

Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) Cloud Computing Advice Note (October 2019). It has also been informed by EU developments and initiatives such as the Data and Data Governance Acts, the Interoperable Europe Act, the AI Act and the Open Data Directive. This alignment is important to ensure the strategic objectives of this strategy meet the objectives of the Courts Service and the Courts, to ensure that the Courts Service is playing its part in improving the broader justice and public sector and also gaining synergies from and moving in the same direction as our justice partners and other public bodies.

Analyse

The results of the consultation phases were collated and analysed, with all responses examined, and were combined with a review of relevant existing strategies, plans and guidance, ultimately leading to the identification of six key themes for the 2024-2027 strategy. These themes were expanded into areas of focus and associated actions specifically informed by the concerns identified during the consultation phases.

Write Up

Finally, iterative refinement of the objectives and actions for each key theme was completed. The timeline of the ICT, Digital, and Data Strategy was chosen to be three years (Q4 2024–Q3 2027), which allows for the prioritisation of actions and objectives in alignment with the governance structures within the Courts Service.

2. VISION

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VISION

Vision Statement

The vision of this strategy is to **mature and expand our accessible and user-centric digital, technology, and data services, through a culture of collaboration, consistency, and continuous improvement**.

Figure 2 - Themes of the ICT, Digital, and Data Strategy 2024 – 2027

Goal three of the Corporate Strategic Plan 2024–2027 is "Digital First". To transition the organisation to being a digital first one, the four core themes from the previous ICT and Data strategies – **Data**, **Digital**, **Technology**, and **Security**, remain as important as ever, with a renewed focus on maturing our organisational capabilities in these areas. However, with many of the core elements required to enable delivery of these services now in place, to continue our journey of becoming digital first our strategic view must broaden to include the cross-cutting themes of **Quality of Service** and **Culture**. Between these two new themes, we aim to ensure that the services and tools are not only in place, but that all necessary supports are also in place, and paired with a focus on adoption and getting the most value from our technology. Quality of Service aims to support adoption via improved delivery, accessibility, and training, re-affirming our commitment to the high service quality required for Courts in a modern, digital Ireland. The Culture theme will focus on the need to transition our current ICT way of working towards one that is better equipped to more effectively meet the needs of the "Optimise" phase of the modernisation programme, enabling greater innovation, collaboration, and more sustainable service delivery over the long-term.

3. STRATEGIC THEMES

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STRATEGIC THEMES

Quality of Service

Context

The previous ICT and Data strategies had a core objective to materially improve the baseline capabilities across ICT, digital, data, and security. We have made numerous advancements in these areas, with 75% of our strategic actions having been fully achieved, and 19% partially achieved. We have also seen significant improvements in user satisfaction scores for ICT related services over the last three years, moving from 40% satisfaction in 2021 to 74% in 2024, see figure below. With many new services in place, a key priority for this strategic period will be the ongoing assessment and improvement of service quality for the ICT, Digital, and Data capabilities provided to our users. This aligns with the Connecting Government 2030: A Digital and ICT Strategy for Ireland's Public Service and its goal of "...providing better access to trusted, high quality digital government services; services that are delivered in an equitable, inclusive and sustainable manner with better service to those who need assistance...".

ICT Satisfaction Comparison 2021/2024
● 2021 ○ 2024
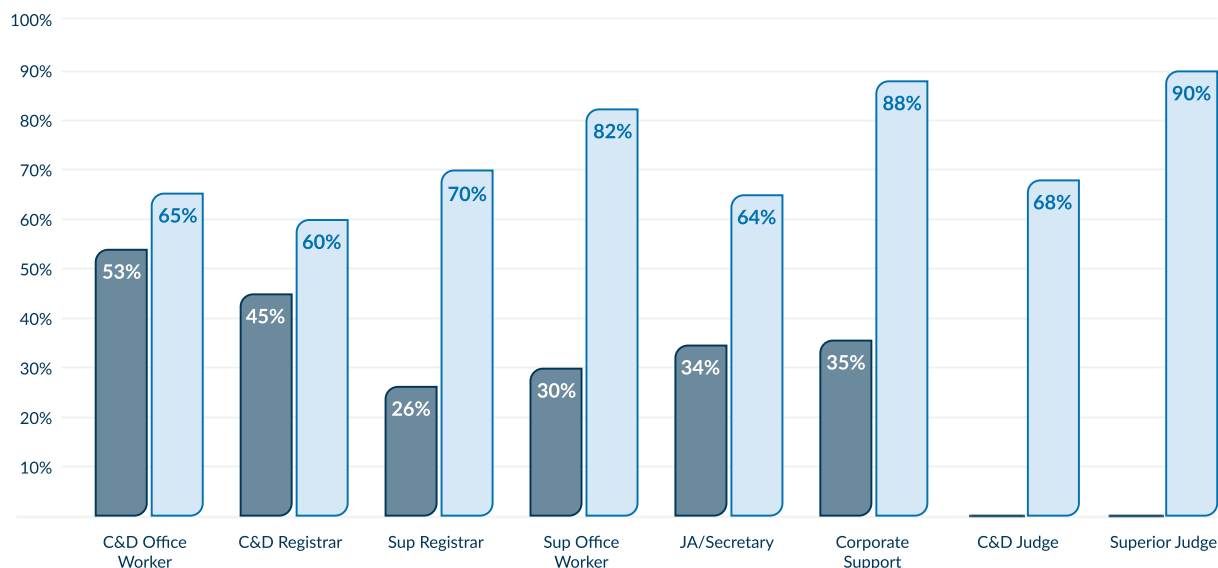
| | 2021 Overall ICT Satisfaction | **40%** | 2024 Overall ICT Satisfaction | **74%** | Increase from 2021 to 2024 | **+34%** |

*Figure 3 - ICT Satisfaction Comparison 2021/2024; *"C&D" – Circuit & District Courts, "Sup" – Superior Courts, "JA" – Judicial Assistant*

Commitment to meeting this goal will require ongoing effort across several areas. The key challenge faced in this respect is the lack of a standardised approach to defining and measuring, and thus improving, service quality. Without this in place, there will be a degree of uncertainty and inconsistency around the current quality levels of services. Central to our efforts to address service quality will be the further maturation and operationalisation of our Service Delivery Model to include both Data and Digital services, paired with a pro-active approach to measuring and monitoring service quality to highlight needed actions not only to adjust to changing user requirements and expectations but crucially to introduce a more pro-active approach to driving adoption and support.

To fully capitalise on investments made in technology, digital, and data, we must strive to achieve high utilisation of these technologies, which will require concerted effort in the area of increased adoption of services among internal and external users. A renewed focus on learning and development initiatives for Courts Service staff and the judiciary will be core to supporting the enhancements to be made to our Service Delivery Model. Enhancing accessibility and ease of use of our services, both internal and external, will be key to equitably catering to the widest possible audience. These will be accompanied by a review of our Support Model to ensure that our Support Service is being delivered in an efficient and effective manner.

For these reasons, and in conjunction with the results of the public consultation, the following are the focus areas we have identified for the Quality of Service theme.

- **A.** **Service Delivery Model**
- **B.** **Adoption**
- **C.** **Learning & Development**
- **D.** **Accessibility & Ease of Use**
- **E.** **ICT Support Model**

Focus Area | Service Delivery Model

The Courts Service's ongoing digital transformation means that our technology landscape will continue to evolve, with user requirements and expectations subject to constant change, necessitating a structured and consistent approach to service improvement to keep pace. This strategy will leverage a multi-channel Service Delivery Model, developed with a focus on service quality and the end-user experience, delivered by support staff that are engaged and well-trained.

While we have already seen an increase in overall ICT user satisfaction levels over a number of years, the Courts Service recognises the need to mature and operationalise

our Service Delivery Model in a consistent way across ICT, digital, and data according to industry best practices. Anecdotal evidence suggests that service quality is not consistent across the full range of services we provide, and that utilisation of these services is not currently optimised. To make effective and informed decisions to improve and standardise service quality, we must first be able to accurately define and measure the key criteria for quality in a consistent and reliable way across the full range of services we provide. Critical to this effort is the service catalogue, which will be expanded to include delivery criteria that are both well-defined and measurable for all services. With these criteria defined and measured, they can be more effectively monitored and addressed by remedial actions through our continuous improvement programme. For example, one such criteria for externally facing systems will be the availability of adoption-encouraging user-friendly usage guides.

To support this drive for continuous improvement, we will introduce various measuring tools across the organisation. Building on the transition to Windows-based laptops, we will deploy Digital Experience Monitoring Tools across the device fleet to monitor the device experience for Courts Service users. Interaction patterns with the UCMS and Courts.ie will be similarly tracked, and our data services will be monitored to determine who is using them, what they are being used for, and how they can be improved.

With these tools and a standardised approach to service delivery in place, we will be better able to identify gaps in the service catalogue and more accurately gauge both the maturity and the effectiveness of services. This will ensure that they deliver appropriate value for the money spent. When paired with a programme of continuous improvement, we will be able to enhance the quality of our ICT services and better support the Courts Service 10-year Long-Term Strategic Vision.

Service Delivery Model Actions

ACTION 01: Create a single model for the delivery of all ICT, Digital and Data services. Through this we will understand our services better. We will use this model to improve our services incrementally.

ACTION 02: Extend our service catalogue. Add criteria that are concise and can be measured. This will support the new service delivery model.

ACTION 03: Introduce new measuring tools for devices, courts.ie, case management systems, data reports, etc. These tools will allow us to use data to improve our services.

ACTION 04: Use the service catalogue to detect and fix issues with our services. Doing this in a systematic way will support us to improve the quality of our services.

Focus Area | **Adoption**

It is essential that both internal and external users are aware of how our technologies and systems can benefit them, and how they can access or use them most effectively. Failure to adopt digital services, for example by staff, judiciary, practitioners, could undermine investments in modernisation, and hamper our ability to achieve our vision of a courts system within a modern, digital Ireland. To help address this, we will establish a dedicated Digital Adoption and Fluency team within the ICT Directorate, which will work with colleagues across the organisation to encourage and drive adoption. The team will adopt a multi-channel approach to increasing organisation technology capability and driving adoption, across a range of channels such as webinars, in-person group and one-on-one settings, e-mail, Teams, Intranet, and town halls.

The Courts Service aims to achieve greater utilisation of technologies both inside and outside of courtrooms, through the identification of opportunities for improvement, followed by planning and execution of targeted adoption-focused initiatives. We will also assess the general adoption of technology among staff and the judiciary, to enhance engagement and collaboratively seek ways to optimise the use of or find new applications of our services.

Of the feedback received as part of the public consultation, the most frequently repeated element was the significance of hybrid or remote hearings for vulnerable witnesses. This was raised by four Justice-sector advocacy and support groups, and its importance was emphasised in cases of domestic violence. Remote and hybrid courtroom technology is a key priority to be able to support victims of domestic violence and other vulnerable Court users, to provide them a safe and secure avenue through which they can attend Court. We will aim to support adoption of this technology, working with staff, the judiciary and county registrars to further explore potential opportunities in this area.

As requested as part of the consultation responses, we will continue to augment ways of working across both the Courts Service and the judiciary, through greater usage and availability of collaboration tools of standard desktop offerings. Paired with targeted training and communications, this will ensure that users are aware of these collaboration features. To support adoption of new technology amongst the judiciary

we will continue to tailor tools and training materials for the Judicial audience, aligning them to existing Judicial processes where possible.

Adoption Actions

ACTION 05: Create a new Digital Adoption and Fluency team. The team will help users learn new technology skills generally. The team will also support technology adoption making sure it is having the desired impact.

ACTION 06: Optimise the use of technology in courtrooms. We will work with colleagues to explore its use in different case types and scenarios.

ACTION 07: Support judges to adopt new technology. This will be done though proactive engagements, training, and through tailored tools (e.g. digital dictation).

Focus Area | Learning & Development

The ability to consistently maintain high service quality is closely linked to the capabilities of Courts Service staff and the judiciary. We are committed to their ongoing learning and development in the areas of ICT, digital, and data, as it will be essential to the effective functioning of the Service Delivery Model. As we transition to an increasingly digital and data-led working environment, our provided training and development opportunities must keep pace with any changes to ensure that our users have all the skills and knowledge necessary to approach their day-to-day responsibilities in the most effective manner possible. Staff training will be developed in conjunction with the Learning & Development Unit around utilisation of new tools, systems such as the UCMS, courtroom technology, and data, which will contribute to maintaining a high level of staff proficiency and will enable them to fully capitalise on investments made in these areas.

We will develop and run ICT webinars as part of our commitment to furthering staff development. These sessions will cover a broad range of topics relevant to both Courts Service staff and the judiciary, with the aim of working towards an increased baseline understanding of ICT topics within the organisation. This will be accompanied by other technology-related training initiatives, such as:

- drop-in clinics, to enable staff to effectively leverage specific tools and technologies.

- the judiciary will receive focused support through the creation of bespoke training materials, designed in alignment with their existing processes and expectations, and involving judicial assistants and the Judicial Council.

- our existing security training initiatives, such as our simulated phishing attack programme, will be expanded and new training programmes will be developed as needed to improve user readiness for modern cybersecurity threats.

To advance the goal of transforming the Courts Service into a data-driven organisation, another key focus for the 2024-2027 strategy period will be data training. This will be designed and delivered to elevate the overall level of data literacy within the Courts Service and will be paired with training initiatives on the effective use of ICT-provided Business Intelligence tools with the aim of enhancing users' self-service data analysis capabilities. There will also be a significant drive around the development of role-based data training programmes, tailored to the specific needs of different user groups, educating users on the data they need to be aware of, and how that data can be support them in performing their duties.

Learning & Development Actions

ACTION 08: Support staff and judges with ICT skills development. This will be through multiple modes such as webinars, drop-in clinics, e-modules, in-person sessions, etc.

ACTION 09: Help build a data-driven culture through tailored data training for staff and judges.

ACTION 10: Create training courses for UCMS working with the Courts Service's Learning and Development team.

Focus Area | Accessibility & Ease of Use

It is essential that all individuals who engage with the Irish legal system, regardless of their abilities or backgrounds, can understand and navigate content, systems, data, and processes. To that end, our services must be delivered in an equitable and inclusive manner, providing better service to those who need assistance, in alignment with the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty, as laid out in Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Act 2014. Clear from our engagement with bodies such as NALA, the National Advocacy Service, and Age Action on the topic of inclusive digital

transformation in advance of commencing work on this strategy, we need to prioritise initiatives aimed at enhancing accessibility and ease of use across our services.

In accordance with the Courts Service Public Sector Duty Action Plan, one of our key objectives in this area is the improvement of the accessibility of the Courts.ie website. In addition to improving the website's accessibility through the implementation of additional accessibility features, as per the EU Web Accessibility Directive, we must also further increase the usage of plain language across all public digital content to effectively support vulnerable individuals with limited literacy. Lowering the assessed reading age of the website will enable the content to be more easily understood by a broader audience. By ensuring that the site can be navigated successfully by users of wide literacy levels we give them the ability to better prepare themselves for interactions with the Courts system. The Courts.ie site should be seen as a resource for those interacting with the courts system directly and indirectly, where for example practitioners can use the site to explain to clients what they are facing into.

To drive greater accessibility within the courtrooms, we have implemented assistive listening technology for the hearing-impaired, along with the technology necessary to support remote and hybrid hearings for Courts users with mobility issues or vulnerable users who are subject to safety concerns. These have both demonstrated the potential opportunity of applying technology-driven solutions to address real issues within the courtrooms. We will strive to embed new and innovative accessibility features in the future design of courtroom technology solutions, to cater to the needs of the widest range of users.

We recognise the importance of intuitive, easy-to-use digital and technology solutions, designed according to user-centric design principles, particularly in relation to our core digital systems such as the UCMS and the UCMS Portal. Engaging in prototype feedback sessions with the public has proven to be useful in refining these systems and we will continue to follow best practices in service design, incorporating Design Principles for Government and informed through feedback sessions with staff, the judiciary, and the public to ensure that systems and services meet user requirements and expectations. All of these aims around accessibility and ease-of-use will be supported by ongoing efforts to improve our awareness and understanding of the needs of our neurodiverse and differently abled users.

Accessibility & Ease of Use Actions

ACTION 11: We commit to the equitable and inclusive delivery of services, as per the Courts Service Public Sector Duty Action Plan 2024-2027. This is in alignment with the requirements set out in Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Act 2014.

ACTION 12: We will rebuild our courts.ie website to make it simple, clear and easy for everyone to use. The website will work well on phones, tablets, and computers. The new website will score over 90% in the National Disability Authority Accessibility Score (top 10% of public body websites). The site will achieve a Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 level of "AA" and have a significantly lowered reading age.

ACTION 13: We will work to add new and creative ways to make our services easier for people to use. This includes things like the hearing devices we have already added in courtrooms and the option to attend court remotely from another location.

ACTION 14: We will continue to use inclusive practices to design our services, following the Government's Design Principles. We will also test new ideas and ask for feedback from staff, judges, and the public to make sure our services meet everyone's needs.

Focus Area | **ICT Support Model**

Core to our ability to deliver high-quality ICT services is the development and ongoing refinement of an effective Support Model. Our goal is to continue to improve our Support Model to deliver a robust and responsive service that meets the expectations of our users, enabling sustained excellence in service delivery throughout the next strategy period.

As part of these efforts, we will be conducting a full review of our ICT Support Model, including IT Service Management, with an aim to incorporating structured and consistent support for both internal and external-facing systems such as the UCMS Portal. We will also work to identify potential areas of improvement to our processes and service catalogue. The Courts Service has challenging requirements in this area, one of which is the high number of distributed locations requiring consistent support services (e.g. ideally a consistent response time regardless of location), coupled with the critical need for robust and reliable solutions to avoid disruptions to the legal process.

We will continue to maintain our proactive support processes for the judiciary, actively seeking feedback and information on any issues they are experiencing with Courts Service provided technology. With this increased level of support, we will continue to prioritise the operational efficiency and capabilities of the judiciary. We will also assess

our support model for courtroom technology in relation to courts users, such as legal practitioners or members of An Garda Síochána.

For newly launched technologies and systems, we will continue to optimise the hyper-care model, including use of tech bars to provide rapid and responsive support. Though this support offering is resource-intensive by nature, its value is clear when utilised for post-launch support of new systems, with previous tech-bars having received very positive feedback. However, a balanced approach will be needed in their application, to be able to do so in a sustainable fashion without impacting other supported systems.

ICT Support Model Actions

ACTION 15: We will review how we provide ICT support to improve it. The review will include new systems like UCMS and UCMS Portal, the extra support provided for new services, the new support model for judges. We will review how to provide the same support level no matter where people are located. This will align with our organisation's plan to improve customer support for everyone.

Digital

Context

Digital technologies are crucial for achieving the Courts Service's Long-Term Strategic Vision 2030 – supporting access to justice in a modern, digital Ireland. We are building new systems that will enable end-to-end journeys, where users will be able to start, manage and track a legal case in a continuous, digital process. The future direction for digital case management consists of developing and rolling out components of the Unified Case Management System that caters to different user groups and integrate seamlessly. These will allow internal and external stakeholders to follow and interact with the case throughout its lifecycle.

UCMS as previously referenced is the new back-office case management system allowing court staff to manage cases. UCMS Portal, which will launch shortly, is an external facing component of UCMS, allowing court users to create and track cases online. Lastly, the UCMS Judiciary, which will launch in 2025, will deliver case management functionality to Judges and County Registrars. These taken together will facilitate end-to-end digital journeys, and are designed to complement and better

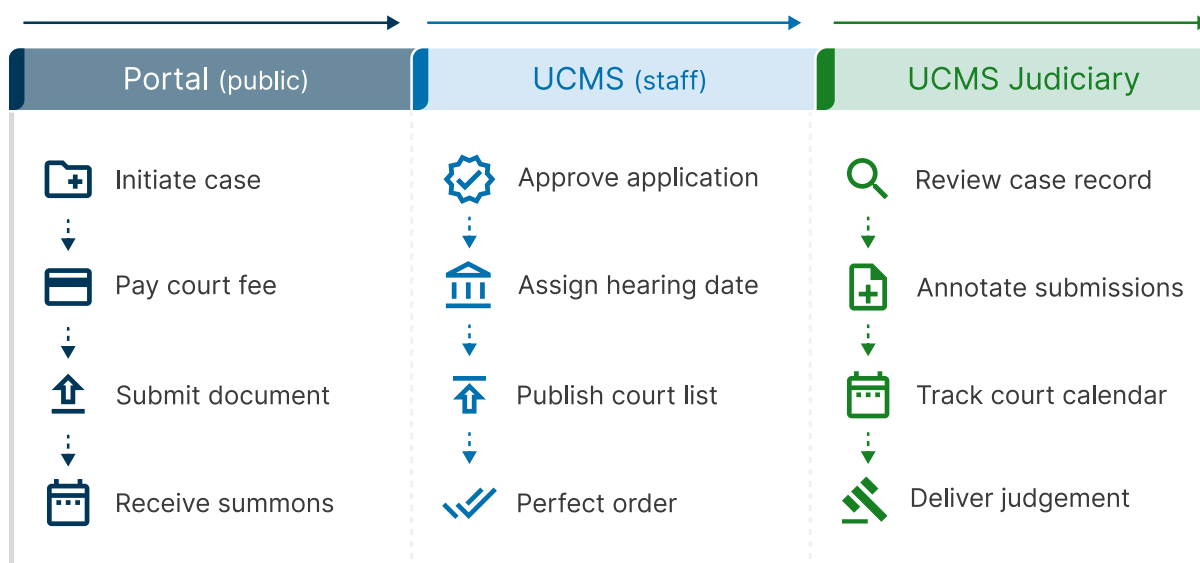support, but not replace, existing in-person channels, such as attending court offices or court proceedings.

Portal (public)	UCMS (staff)	UCMS Judiciary
Initiate case	Approve application	Review case record
Pay court fee	Assign hearing date	Annotate submissions
Submit document	Publish court list	Track court calendar
Receive summons	Perfect order	Deliver judgement

Figure 4 - End-to-End Journeys enabled by the UCMS Portal, UCMS (staff), and UCMS Judiciary

We will focus on integrating UCMS with our existing web presence on courts.ie, for example to have more up to date and extensive legal diary driven directly from UCMS. We will also integrate UCMS with other systems such as financial management and access to digital recordings. These integrations pave the way for more digitally streamlined court processes.

The primary areas of focus included under this theme are:

    A. **UCMS**
    B. **UCMS Portal**
    C. **UCMS Judiciary**
    D. **UCMS Web Integrations**
    E. **Other Integrations and Supporting Functionality**

Focus Area | **UCMS**

UCMS is the core back-office system used by staff, which lays the foundations for other systems designed for judges, practitioners, and the public. It first went live in 2023, starting with Assisted Decision-Making Capacity (ADMC) cases, and it is now used by all High Court staff as well as all Circuit Family offices across the country. UCMS has already delivered benefits in terms of security, accessibility, and operational efficiency. Staff have also benefitted from enhanced forecasting and decision-making, thanks to the new data dashboards that UCMS enables. The next phase of UCMS will focus on expanding its reach to all other jurisdictions and areas of law. This will involve rolling

out UCMS to the Supreme Court, Court of Appeal, Circuit Court Civil, District Court Civil, and District Court Family offices, and Probate staff, over the next three years.

Furthermore, the development of UCMS Crime, which will replace two existing systems, is also underway and will be completed during this period. It will involve digitising the court's legal aid process and will enable increased data sharing with other public bodies, such as An Garda Síochána. The roll-out of UCMS Crime will involve staff in District Court, Circuit Court, Central Criminal Court, Special Criminal Court, and Court of Appeal offices.

UCMS Actions

ACTION 16: Expand the unified case management system for civil and family. This will include the rest of the civil and family offices.

ACTION 17: Launch the unified case management system for crime. This will include the digitisation of the court's legal aid process.

Focus Area | UCMS Portal

UCMS Portal is a key component of our digital-first court system, enabling users to initiate and manage court proceedings online without the need for physical attendance or paper-based forms. UCMS Portal aims to provide a user-friendly, secure and modern way of interacting with the courts, reducing administrative burdens and enhancing access to justice, all underpinned by the introduction of new Digital Court Rules. Users will include solicitors, barristers, town agents, lay litigants and other members of the public.

UCMS Portal is currently in a pilot phase for Circuit Family Divorce cases. Participating law firms and litigants are currently testing this which involves submitting Divorce applications electronically, uploading filings and supporting documents, and tracking the progress of their case. This system has been developed through extensive user testing, including substantial engagements with practitioners, members of the public and Law Society committees. Feedback from early testers of UCMS Portal has been positive.

Practitioners anticipate benefits such as tracking multiple cases through their account, while lay litigants will find it convenient to retrieve all case information in a centralised location, especially with proceedings that span several years or changing legal firms. We

have also engaged with our counterparts in the UK, the US, Canada, Demark, Iceland, and others to learn about similar implementations. This ensures that we are building a system that incorporates their lessons learned, such as the criticality of staff and judicial adoption of digital processes to the success of the Portal, are factored in to both the solution and our approach to change management.

Following the Divorce pilot, we will incrementally expand the Portal to support all of Circuit Family country-wide, and then to additional case types and jurisdictions, such as Probate and the High Court. Our new online Probate service will integrate with the Revenue system to streamline the process of applying for probate, reducing data entry by users and enhancing data quality. UCMS Portal will also reduce data entry errors by applying data validation, guiding applicants to provide the correct information throughout.

UCMS Portal will offer 24/7 case tracking, enhancing accessibility and inclusion, in addition to other key functionality:

Statement of Truth
A digital alternative to affidavits and statutory declarations, allowing users to attest to the truthfulness of their statements online.

E-serving
Receiving and delivering court documents and notices to parties and their representatives electronically.

E-filing
Uploading filings, supporting documents or evidence to their online case file, without the need for physical delivery.

E-payments
Paying court fees online.

Identity and Access Management
Secure login using verified credentials, with access, permissions, and case data tied to each user's secure, personal profile.

In addition to this core functionality, we will expand the range of features to support e-bundles – online handling of books of pleadings, which contain the relevant documents and evidence for a hearing. This will be a key input for UCMS Judiciary, allowing judges and county registrars to review and annotate documents electronically.

We will also explore a proof of concept to enable online Call Over processes in consent-based scenarios. This aims to optimise the use of court time by allowing court business to take place through digital channels, where appropriate. Overall, UCMS Portal is a crucial step towards digitising the business of the courts and will greatly reduce paper usage and enhance efficiency.

UCMS Portal Actions

ACTION 18: Launch an online portal for the unified case management system. This will be underpinned by new Digital Court Rules. We will grow the number of case types supported by the portal over time.

ACTION 19: Add support for e-bundles to the portal. This will allow the management of all court documents digitally.

ACTION 20: Explore a proof of concept to enable online Call Over processes.

Focus Area | UCMS Judiciary

The judiciary plays a vital role in the administration of justice and needs to have access to the relevant information and tools to perform their duties efficiently and effectively. To achieve this, we are developing a dedicated portal for the judiciary, UCMS Judiciary, which will allow them to view and manage their cases, access and annotate documents and track upcoming court dates. UCMS Judiciary will be designed with user-centric principles, based on the feedback and insights gathered from numerous engagements with judges and county registrars. The system will have a similar look and feel to UCMS Portal, but with additional features and functionalities tailored to the specific needs of the judiciary.

The roll-out of UCMS Judiciary will begin with a pilot phase involving a small group of judges and county registrars from the Circuit Family Court and High Court. This will be an opportunity to test and refine the system's usability and performance, as well as its interplay with the staff and public-facing aspects of UCMS. We will then incrementally roll it out to the wider judiciary.

UCMS Judiciary is a crucial component of the UCMS project, as it will enable a more efficient, connected, and collaborative court system, where all users can benefit from the advantages of digital transformation. The system will allow for 27/4 access to manage cases, supporting the judiciary's autonomy and reducing their reliance on paper files and paper-based processes by court staff. This initiative will be bolstered by the

development and deployment of a new Judges' intranet, which will replace the current intranet, further advancing the judiciary's digital access to information.

UCMS Judiciary Actions

ACTION 21: Launch a judicial portal for the unified case management system. This will give access to key information like case summaries, documents, and court lists. It will also allow judges to view and add notes to documents.

Focus Area | **UCMS Web Integrations**

As UCMS is rolled out to all jurisdictions and areas of law, it will become the source of truth for court related data. As such we will focus on its integration with our courts.ie website to ensure accurate and timely distribution of data. A key initiative in this area is an upgrade to the Legal Diary. This section of the website gets significant daily traffic from court users, though the current Legal Diary is highly manual for staff to update and it does not cover all jurisdictions. We will modernise and integrate the Legal Diary to all jurisdictions and offices supported by UCMS. By integrating with the UCMS and leveraging automation, we aim to reduce manual input by staff and deliver timely and standardised case scheduling information to the public.

We will also integrate UCMS with other public-facing registers, such as the Bankruptcy Register, Judgments Register, Licensing Register, Personal Insolvency Register, and Probate Register. In streamlining and modernising these registers, we will enhance standardisation by implementing a consistent look and feel.

UCMS Web Integrations Actions

ACTION 22: Expand and automate a new Legal Diary. It will cover all cases tracked by the unified case management system.

ACTION 23: There are many online court registers such as the Bankruptcy Register or the Licensing Register. Make our case management system drive the online court registers.

Focus Area | **Other integrations and supporting functionality**

Besides the core case management functionality, we will implement systems that integrate UCMS data and provide supporting functionality for court services, such as appointment booking, digital recording, financial management, identity and access management, as well as data sharing with other Irish bodies and EU member states. These initiatives enable a digital-first legal system by allowing online booking, access to remote court hearings and audio recordings, secure login for all users, and streamlined court processes. They also improve the transparency, accessibility and operational efficiency of court services by enhancing digital access and data integrity.

Future initiatives for other integrations and supporting functionality include, but not limited to:

- **Building on the rollout of our court office booking system.** Our online booking system provides a user-friendly and secure interface for making appointments at court offices. It has already been rolled out to twenty-six court offices around the country. We will work to upgrade functionality, such as enhanced reporting, digital queuing, and bookings via in-office devices, as well as rolling out the system to other court offices on an as-needed basis.
- **Integrating with courtroom technology.** Integrations of UCMS with the Digital Audio Recording (DAR) will enable ease of (appropriate) access to court recordings for staff and the judiciary.
- **Integrating with financial systems.** These integrations with UCMS will enable streamlined online payments, receipting, reconciliation, data management, and reporting.
- **Integrating with MyGovID.** This integration will enable the authentication and verification of users who access UCMS Portal and other online services. The MyGovID system will provide an alternative single and secure login for lay litigants.
- **Integrating with Revenue.** These integrations will support data exchange with the Revenue Commissioners. For example, Probate applicants will be able to use the same information that they have provided to the Revenue system, reducing data entry by court users, modernising the Probate application process, and streamlining case management and resolutions.
- **Implementing e-CODEX, Service of Documents, Taking of Evidence, and other systems as required by European legal instruments.** In line with EU Regulations, the Courts Service will go live with new systems that will enhance collaboration between Ireland and other EU member states and support the digitisation of processes in the justice sector.

By pursuing these initiatives, the Courts Service can maximise the potential of UCMS by integrating with other systems and investing in supporting functionality to deliver a

digital-first service that meets the needs and expectations of its users and stakeholders. These initiatives will also support the alignment of the Irish courts system with other member states, improving access to justice and judicial cooperation across the EU.

Other integrations and supporting functionality Actions

ACTION 24: Integrate the unified case management system with other key systems. These include for example courtroom and financial systems. Invest in tools such as the appointments booking system and data sharing with other Irish bodies and EU member states.

Technology

Context

Technology is a key enabler for the administration of justice in Ireland, as it underpins almost all processes in the Courts Service. Within the courtrooms, it is used to support and deliver services to both the judiciary and users of the court, such as providing mechanisms for the digital display of evidence, creation and playback of audio recordings of proceedings, and enabling the capability for remote hearings. Similarly, the end-user technology and equipment provided to Courts Service staff and the judiciary, such as laptops or printers, are essential to the completion of their day-to-day activities. This technology is all dependant on a robust and secure underlying infrastructure that needs to support both the current and future requirements of the Courts Service and the judiciary.

As mentioned previously, in 2021 the Courts Service conducted User Journey Mapping exercises to identify the issues users were having with ICT services. The findings were used to inform the direction of the 2021-2024 strategy, and over this time the technology landscape of the Courts Service has seen substantial change. These changes, such as migrating users from thin client endpoints to Windows-based devices, or expanding the standardised courtroom technology set, have provided additional flexibility and contributed to a universal increase in levels of user satisfaction with ICT services.

However, these changes also add a degree of complexity to maintaining currency, increasing the number of devices requiring maintenance, and adding to the demand on

our underlying infrastructure. As we look to the future to progress the Courts Service's Digital Transformation, it is essential that we continue to invest our underlying technologies necessary to succeed, across courtroom technology, end-user technology, and infrastructure technology.

The key areas of focus identified are therefore:

A. **Courtroom Technology**
B. **End-User Technology**
C. **Infrastructure Technology**

Focus Area | **Courtroom Technology**

The Courts Service seeks to utilise courtroom technology to facilitate the administration of justice in a digital environment, however, as the courtroom technology estate grows, we must ensure that we carefully balance the total cost of ownership, including purchase, maintenance, and support of these technologies against the value they provide within budgetary confines. We will put in place and commence a refresh strategy for courtroom technology carefully taking these issues into account.

The Digital Audio Recording (DAR) system is a vital component of the courtroom technology landscape as it enables the capture of a reliable and accurate record of proceedings within the courtroom. While older versions of the DAR system do enable this capability successfully, the physical size of the solution can lead to a cramped and sub-optimal experience for the registrar. We will refresh the DAR technology estate within the Courts, with an emphasis on enhancing the ergonomic experience for the registrars while continuing to maintain reliable and secure performance. To expand its functionality, an integration between the DAR system and the UCMS will be designed and implemented over this strategy period to enable control of the DAR system through UCMS and to allow for the surfacing of relevant recordings for cases.

The courtroom sound systems are used for DAR, evidence playback, remote and hybrid hearings, and the general audibility of the courtroom proceedings. The management of these systems is to be moved to the responsibility of the ICT Operations function within the Courts Service. This will enable us to develop and implement a unified support model for these sound systems, moving away from the current fragmented local support arrangements to one that is centralised and consistent. This will enable a more standardised audio experience across the estate, and once this support model is in place we will design and commence a complete refresh of the existing sound equipment, which will initially be targeted for pilot at key priority venues.

The most common element of the public consultation responses was the critical importance of the capability to attend a hearing remotely, for example in cases of domestic violence, to enable them to do so from a position of safety and security. To

ensure that the experience of these remote sessions improves accordingly, we will continue to enhance the remote court platform, and will either optimise, evolve, or replace it to meet the evolving needs of the Courts Service and the judiciary. We also commit to further collaborating with our justice sector partners, such as An Garda Síochána, to streamline and improve the physical courtroom experience.

Courtroom Technology Actions

ACTION 25: Create a refresh strategy for our courtroom technology. This will protect our investment in this area. It will also ensure it is on a sustainable footing balancing budget against evolving needs.

ACTION 26: Create a reference architecture for the technology that is in our courtrooms. This will combine all elements, including sound. It will support a coherent ecosystem in our courtrooms.

ACTION 27: Centralise the management of courtroom sound systems. This will move us away from the current fragmented support arrangements. It will also introduce a single point of support for all courtroom technology. This will be paired with a gradual equipment upgrade to improve the audio experience for courtroom users.

ACTION 28: Modernise the digital audio recording system in courtrooms. This will improve the ergonomic setup for registrars. It will make the system more reliable and secure. It will allow it to work with the new unified case management system.

ACTION 29: Continue to improve our remote court platform. This will be through either improvement or replacement.

Focus Area | End-User Technology

The end-user technologies provided to staff and the judiciary are essential to the efficient completion of their day-to-day activities. These include, but are not limited to, computing devices such as laptops or desktops, printing facilities, and telephony solutions. As with the technology within the courtrooms, any disruptions have the potential to have a tangible negative impact on service delivery. It is therefore critical that these technologies stay current, secure, accessible, and reliable in order to fulfil the requirements of Courts Service staff, the judiciary, and users.

Accomplishing this will require that we plan and implement a refresh strategy for this strategy period. One key focus will be the upgrade of relevant computing devices to Windows 11 to ensure that they remain supported and secure. We will build on our continuing rollout and replacement programmes within the Courts Service to mitigate wherever possible the impact or disruption of large-scale upgrade initiatives.

To improve location independence for staff and to enable more consistent auto-attendants for in-coming calls, we will migrate from our current traditional VoIP solution to a more modern desktop integrated telephony service.

The results of our customer journey exercise show that printing remains a challenge for Courts Service staff and the judiciary. Though the expectation is that paper usage will drop as the UCMS is further developed, we will be reviewing our print service, paired with a redesign and refresh of all printing infrastructure and hardware across the Courts estate with the aim of not only elevating print quality and security but to consistently provide both reliable scanning and print functionality where they are needed.

Lastly, we will continue to review our current service catalogue to identify opportunities to augment the agility and security of the Courts Service through best practice use of cloud technologies, adopting automation and improving repeatability through approaches such as Infrastructure-as-Code. Where appropriate, adoption of cloud solutions can offer scalable, reliable, and secure alternatives to on-premise physical servers, supporting better service continuity.

End-User Technology Actions

ACTION 30: Put in place a refresh strategy for end-user technology and start its implementation. This will include deciding when to move to Windows 11.

ACTION 31: Move from our current phone system to a modern one that works on desktop and laptops. This will make it easier to make and receive office land line calls from any location. This will also help fix the differences in how phone auto-attendants work across offices.

ACTION 32: Conduct nationwide re-design and refresh of printing hardware, coupled with increasing of our printing and scan service coverage to courtrooms.

ACTION 33: Explore how cloud technology can support us to be more cost effective, agile and secure. This will be paired with automation and using cloud best practices, for example, infrastructure as code.

Focus Area | **Infrastructure Technology**

Network and connectivity infrastructure is vital for the Courts Service, as it enables the delivery of efficient and secure services to Courts Service staff, the judiciary, and court users. A robust and modern network is essential to the ongoing Digital Transformation of the Courts Service. However, we must continue to invest in our network infrastructure to ensure its success. In the same manner as for courtroom technology and end-user technology, an immediate priority will be the creation and implementation of a refresh strategy for infrastructure technology covering the coming strategy period.

A major network upgrade, "Network 2.0", is one such significant undertaking by the Courts Service to expand, modernise, and secure our networking systems for contemporary requirements. This comprehensive program includes several key components, focused on enhancing security and performance. As a two-front initiative it aims to create a performant network while simultaneously onboarding security postures that are fit-for-purpose for a modern digital Ireland.

Included in the Network 2.0 upgrade will be an overhaul and redesign of both our internal and external firewall architectures, expanding our defences against potential threats and laying the groundwork for future requirements. We will also assess potential upgrades to our network switches across the country to accommodate the growing need for data and application processing in a digital context. Additionally, we will investigate potential upgrades to our Data Centre equipment, such as our Aggregated Service Routers, which are crucial for a stable and efficient network service. This will be accompanied by a significant improvement to our load balancing and network traffic management, moving from hardware to software solutions to bolster scalability and simplify management.

We will also be running a Network Expansion Program with the aim of adding approximately 10 currently non-networked court sites to the Courts network per year during the strategy. This will facilitate the delivery of more consistent services at these locations for all users. During this strategy period we will conclude our connectivity, coverage, and operating model enhancement programme for the Courts Service estate Wi-Fi, ensuring consistency of network access for staff, the judiciary, practitioners, and justice partners.

Combined with the planned actions for courtroom technology and end-user technology, the Network Expansion Programme and the Wi-Fi enhancement initiative will contribute to a notably more standardised experience across Courts venues. For new or planned venues, we will continue to support the development of new courthouses, designing and deploying the technology for these buildings. Of note is the

Hammond Lane Courthouse due for delivery in 2028, with the pre-requisite design stages to be completed within the 2024 – 2027 strategy period.

Infrastructure Technology Actions

ACTION 34: Put in place a refresh strategy for infrastructure technology that is aligned with the budget. Once in place, start implementing it.

ACTION 35: Carry out a major countrywide network upgrade programme, "Network 2.0", to improve both the security of our network and to increase its performance.

ACTION 36: Start a network expansion programme. This will add more court venues to the Courts Service network.

ACTION 37: Finish the rollout of Wi-Fi across all of the Courts Service estate.

ACTION 38: Support the design and build of the upcoming Hammond Lane Family Courts complex, and other new venues, as needed.

Data

Context

In early 2021, the Courts Service conducted a Data Maturity Assessment (DMA) to evaluate the organisation's data maturity. This assessment combined surveys and stakeholder interviews across all directorates and jurisdictions within the Courts Service. The results, which yielded an overall score of 1.7 out of a maximum of 5, highlighted key data themes and challenges. These findings led to the development of the strategic actions for data for the 2021 – 2024 strategy period.

A total of 23 short-term and long-term actions were defined to improve data maturity and address the identified shortcomings. One key action was to conduct a follow-up DMA towards the end of the 2021–2024 strategy period to assess the effectiveness of the implemented improvements.

In 2024, this follow-up DMA was carried out using the same DAMA-DMBoK industry standard framework. The assessment revealed a material improvement in data maturity,

with the overall score increasing from 1.7 in 2021 to 2.5 in 2024. As shown in the figure below, 10 of the 11 Data Management Areas saw increased maturity. This reflects the development of emerging data management capabilities, greater consistency in tools and knowledge across the Courts, and a broader adoption of electronic data, although the use of paper data remains significant.

Data Management Area	2021	2024	Change
Data governance	Level 2	Level 3	↑
Document collection & management	Level 2	Level 2	—
Data access & storage	Level 2	Level 3	↑
Data security	Level 2	Level 3	↑
Data quality	Level 2	Level 3	↑
Data availability & integration	Level 2	Level 3	↑
Data analytics	Level 1	Level 2	↑
Reference & master data	Level 1	Level 2	↑
Data architecture	Level 1	Level 2	↑
Data modelling & design	Level 1	Level 2	↑
Metadata	Level 1	Level 2	↑

Figure 3 - Comparison of Data Maturity Assessment Results

The Courts Service has also made noteworthy improvements in the modernisation of its underlying data architecture and data model. These advancements have enabled a significant increase in the number of datasets and the volume of data ingested from legacy systems, ultimately providing staff and the judiciary with access to richer data and dashboards. These tools are driving better and faster decision-making. A key outcome of the 2021-2024 strategy period was the establishment in 2022 of the Data Team within the ICT Directorate, with a responsibility for data across the organisation. The Courts Service is committed to investing in data, and this dedicated team reflects that commitment. The actions driven by the Data Team since its creation have improved the organisation's Data capabilities, as is apparent from the results of the 2024 DMA.

Over the next strategic period we will focus on improving data collection, guiding staff on its use, enhancing sharing with Justice partners, and ensuring robust security and data protection. We will also focus on the importance of data quality and literacy, laying a strong foundation for the Courts Service's continued growth and innovation.

The key areas of focus for Data across the organisation throughout 2024 – 2027 are as follows:

A. **Data Quality**

B. **Use of Data**

C. **Governance and Improved Processes**

D. **Data Technology**

Focus Area | **Data Quality**

While improvements in data quality have been realised over the last three years, issues with data quality still exist. Data quality continues to be impacted through inconsistent implementation of practices across regions and offices. By extending our Data Quality Programme through the initiation of regular data profiling, we can improve our ability to derive critical insights from data, confident in its legitimacy and quality. In ensuring that data quality is measured, tracked, reported on, and remediated, we will enable continuous improvement of the Courts Service's quality of data.

Higher quality data not only provides opportunities for improved decision-making, but also has the potential to generate greater consistency and efficiencies across the organisation. By developing more reports and dashboards we will have better data to identify process inconsistencies, and we will be in a better position to take action. The benefits of the Data Quality Programme will be instrumental in supporting the Courts Service's transformation to a data-driven organisation and provides the crucial foundation necessary to develop role-based data-driven guidance.

The implementation of the Courts Service Data Architecture, Unified Data Model and Data Lake was a significant outcome from the 2021 Data Strategy. Having a 'single source of truth' in place provides users a place to access up-to-date, consistent, and accurate information, all of which are essential for informed decision-making. However, data that is input into systems is not always easily available for reporting and analytics. We will continue to further develop the data lake as a 'single source of truth' through the continuous inclusion of additional trusted and verified datasets.

The creation and maintenance of shared, common, and trusted central registries of identifiers for frequently used elements has the potential to reduce ambiguity and the likelihood of misunderstandings and errors. We will collaborate with our justice sector partners to further develop these common data registries and identifiers to improve the overall efficiency of the Irish legal system. For example, usage of a common identifier to refer to specific Garda stations rather than relying on address or name of location, or the creation of a common list of offence charge codes.

Data Quality Actions

ACTION 39: Improve the data quality programme within the Courts Service. This will be done by creating data quality reports to measure data quality. These will be paired with a defined remediation process.

ACTION 40: Further develop the data lake as the verified and trusted 'single source of truth'. Add more datasets to the lake from which reports can be built. Continue to update the data dictionary to track agreed metric definitions.

ACTION 41: Create trusted common data registries for both internal and external use. For example, this will include a common set of offence codes for crime across the justice sector. This work will be done in collaboration with justice sector partners.

Focus Area | **Use of Data**

Though the availability of data has significantly increased in the time since the publication of the prior strategy, there is still a feeling among some users that it can be difficult to identify which data to use and how do act upon data. One of the core mechanisms of transforming the Courts Service into a data-driven organisation will be the development of role-based data guidance for interpreting and using data. This will support users in understanding the data most relevant to their duties and will make clear the key indicators to be monitored, in addition to other data of interest or relating to accountability. These indicators will be paired with scenario-based recommendations to address instances where measurements are not reaching expected values.

To deliver this guidance to users, we will create new training programmes for each role, to achieve a standardised and consistent approach to use of data across similar roles within the organisation. The creation of both the role-based data guidance and the associated training programmes will be conducted in agreement with relevant operational areas through an iterative approach, refining published material and gradually expanding out to additional roles over time. We will also work with the judiciary, in particular with the Court Presidents, to ensure they are in a position to take advantage of the data that is available to improve how the Courts system functions.

| 01 Data Quality Programme | 02 Role-Based Data Guidance | 03 Data Training |

Figure 4 - Flow diagram for Role-Based Data Guidance

To further enable greater use of data within the Courts Service, we will augment self-service data analytics capabilities through greater quantities of pre-built dashboards and reports, supplemented with training and additional licenses for appropriate Business Intelligence tools to enable deeper interrogation of data. We are also planning to enhance management reporting throughout the Courts Service, through the integration of Human Resources (HR), Financial, and Estates data into the data lake. This will support the provision of higher utility executive level dashboards, enabling more efficient management of the overall organisation.

The 2023 OECD Trust Survey showed an increase in the percentage of the population of Ireland having high or moderately high trust in the Courts and Judicial System, and we would like to further build on this public trust through openness and transparency. The Open Data Portal is a vital mechanism to achieving this, providing a window through which the public can view and examine justice system-related data. We will expand upon the datasets currently available to the public on the Open Data Portal.

Use of Data Actions

ACTION 42: Create a suite of role-based guides on the use of data. This will be used to train staff on what to do with the data that is available to them. This will help improve process consistency, improve data quality, and improve decision-making.

ACTION 43: Create and share more reports with staff and judges. These reports will show key activities and high-level metrics to support making decisions.

ACTION 44: Create more interactive data dashboards. These dashboards will focus on the detailed analysis of data and trends about a specific area or topic.

ACTION 45: Add HR, finance, estate, and learning data to our data lake. This will allow us to build dashboards combining this data with court activity data for deeper insights.

ACTION 46: To build public trust in the transparency of the Courts Service and justice system we will continue to expand the Open Data Portal by identifying and including additional datasets.

Focus Area | Governance and Improved Processes

Over the past three years, the organisation has strengthened from a Data Governance perspective, with the establishment of a Data Governance Committee, creation of necessary policies, processes and procedures, and generally fostering a stronger awareness of the importance of data and its oversight. We will continue to expand these policies and procedures to improve data management within the organisation, consistency and quality of data, and security of data.

For example, correct and appropriate records management is essential to ensure that physical and digital records can be located, retrieved, and secured as needed. We have rolled out a records management policy and have been working on a project to improve data retention across the Courts. This solution should be rolled out to all offices to ensure boxes of physical records are correctly stored offsite, logged, and tracked centrally such that we have a full and detailed knowledge of each record's location.

However, as with any organisation, policies and procedures may not always be followed fully during normal day to day operations. The results of the 2021 DMA suggest that in situations where this occurs in relation to data within the Courts Service, the cause was primarily due to a lack of awareness of the policies and procedures in place. From a compliance and audit perspective it is essential that Courts Service can identify instances where awareness of specific policies and procedures needs to be increased, to ensure they are followed adequately by staff.

We will undertake an audit of implementation of data-related policies and procedures to assess adherence and issue targeted training material and communications to address shortcomings. We will also establish a catalogue of published policies and procedures to proactively raise awareness of these and link them to associated training.

Within the field of data sharing, for example, good progress has been made but we must continue to develop better oversight, management processes, and controls of sharing practices. Data is shared through multiple channels currently, at times manually with potentially inconsistent outcomes as well as being a potential security risk. This can result in significantly higher complexity of the management and monitoring of both data to be shared and its intended recipients. To improve our management of data sharing, we will move towards a more modern data sharing architecture, which will enable

improved monitoring and oversight of data sharing both in and out of the Courts Service. This will support the development of an enhanced central data sharing hub from which it can be tracked and managed appropriately. We will also seek to increase data sharing via the Department of Justice Criminal Justice Operational Hub replacing where possible manual paper or digital sharing with secure systematic processes.

The Courts Service is obligated to regularly produce externally facing data, such as the data forming the basis of the Judicial Planning Working Group JPWG Report. While multiple instances of data gathering have been automated, many data points still require cumbersome, time-consuming manual intervention or manual sharing by relevant operational units. This highlights an obvious need to improve our internal data collection processes, particularly for consistently requested data points. We need to make further progress in this area by refining our data-gathering processes, minimising manual intervention wherever possible through process improvements or automation. Accomplishing this will make our data gathering more reliable, reduce the risk of human error and will additionally free up staff in these operational areas for higher-value activities.

Governance and Improved Processes Actions

ACTION 47: Improve our records management processes to support compliance with data retention law. This will be done in offices with the help of the Data Unit through data retention advice and tools.

ACTION 48: Add more data policies and procedures and create a catalogue to share them. This will help people know about them, follow them, and complete any needed training.

ACTION 49: Carry out a data maturity review at the end of this period. This will allow us to measure the progress made.

ACTION 50: We will upgrade to a modern system for sharing data, making it easier to manage and oversee. This will include a clear process for keeping track of data that is being shared in and out of the Courts Service.

ACTION 51: Share more data using the Hub. This will replace slow and error prone manual paper sharing with digital sharing. The Hub is a secure system run by the Department of Justice for sharing crime data.

ACTION 52: Improve the data gathering process for creating data reports. The aim is to automate as much as possible and reduce manual data entry.

Focus Area | **Data Technology**

While a modern document management technology solution will exist as part of the UCMS eco-system for Court records, the storing, managing and locating administrative documents currently remains a challenge. Documents continue to be stored in multiple systems including physical files, network drive locations, and emails, resulting in the user finding it challenging to easily and quickly locate the data they need. A modern, fit for purpose document management system will greatly improve efficiency with respect to the management, storage, locating, and authoring (specifically co-authoring) of documents. As such, a key technology focus will be the implementation of an Electronic Document Management System (EDMS) application for the management of documents related to the Courts Service's administrative data and for judicial use.

We will continue to take a horizon-scanning approach to investigating and leveraging any new technology that has the potential to augment our ability meet the data demands of the organisation, whether in BI tooling, data management solutions, database solutions, advancements in cloud data storage, or selective application of generative AI to help drive improvements and efficiencies.

Data Technology Actions

ACTION 53: Roll out an Electronic Document Management System. this will allow us to better store, track, manage, edit and share documents.

Security

Context

Security remains a crucial theme for the 2024–2027 strategy period. During the prior strategy period we significantly invested in this area, with the implementation of improved vulnerability management and threat intelligence tools, the development of a Cyber Security Incident Response plan, and the implementation of a more effective cyber security governance model. However, the Courts Service must continue to take a proactive approach in order to keep up with the modern cybersecurity threats facing public bodies, and where possible implement the robust security measures necessary to prevent unauthorised access or disruptions to court operations.

We continue to see examples world-wide of high-profile data breaches, further emphasising the continued importance of data privacy and security for the Courts Service. The Courts Service recognises the vulnerability of some of its users, and as

raised during our consultation phase the need for exceptional care to be taken with their data to ensure their rights are upheld.

We have also seen improvements made to our resiliency, having completed a Disaster Recovery (DR) assessment and a number of actions based on the results, such as rebuilding our DR infrastructure. However, as it is a key aim that the Courts Service systems are resilient enough to avoid disruptions to service delivery, there remains scope for further improvement to our Disaster Recovery strategy.

Lastly, while we have developed and run a number of user security awareness programmes, we must continue ensure that our staff and the judiciary understand the modern cyber security threats faced by a public institution and how best to respond to them.

As such, the areas of focus in the security theme are:

A. **Network & Resilience**
B. **Operations & Awareness**

Focus Area | Network & Resilience

Network Security is of exceptional importance for the Courts Service, as any compromised data or systems could have a significant impact on its operational capability, its reputation, and in some cases, the safety of Courts users. The cybersecurity posture of the Courts Service network will be addressed by elements of the Network 2.0 refresh described previously. This will include a number of security specific enhancements, designed according to Secure-by-Design best practices. We will implement network segmentation and will onboard Zero Trust Network Architecture (ZTNA) principles. We also aim to improve network device hardening to reduce vulnerability to exploits and bad actors. To address security in relation to physical access to the Courts Service network, we will implement fit-for-purpose protocols for wired devices.

Utilising the features provided by the VXLAN technology, we plan to implement stretch clustering and multisite clustering to further streamline our site-to-site failover process in the event of a single-site failure. Our DR capabilities are of critical importance in maintaining continued service provision. Given that a failure in this area would have the potential to impact legal proceedings, it is essential that we look to how we can further improve the resiliency of the Courts Service ICT systems. Building on the work of the last three years, which included creation of Recovery Time Objectives (RTO) and Recovery Point Objectives (RPO), we will expand our set of Technical Recovery Plans for systems, prioritised by criticality, to ensure that in the event of an outage systems can be efficiently prioritised for restoration with the required steps to do so already

known and documented. Additionally, we will continue to enhance our overall DR responsiveness and capability through regular testing, red team exercises and drills to evaluate DR strategies and refine them as needed to ensure the most effective and appropriate responses are in place, should an outage occur. We will also assess and consider the usage of a Disaster Recovery as a Service provider to further enhance resiliency.

Network & Resilience Actions

ACTION 54: Improve the security posture of the Courts Service. The "Network 2.0" project will improve this through a redesign our network following best practice.

ACTION 55: Make our disaster recovery processes stronger by the introduction of VXLAN. This will help protect our systems and data.

ACTION 56: Create technical recovery plans for our systems in order of importance. This will ensure that we widely know how to restore our systems.

ACTION 57: Continue to test and improve the Disaster Recovery processes and set up for all our systems.

Focus Area | Operations & Awareness

Though investments in security hardware can provide a strong layer of protection, they are not sufficient without effective operational processes and training. It is vital that staff are able to identify potential security threats and that they follow best practices to mitigate security risks. Without this awareness, human error can be a frequent cause for security incidents through falling prey to malicious links or phishing campaigns. As such, staff security training and security operational capabilities need to be improved in parallel with security hardware.

Expansion of our existing Security Operations Centre (SOC) to one that operates 24/7 will enhance the Courts Service's ability to protect its network and data, enabling continuous monitoring and immediate response to security incidents. Cyber threats are not contained to normal business hours, and having a team available around the clock ensures that any potential breaches or anomalies can be detected and addressed in real-time, reducing the risk of prolonged exposure and damage. Additionally, a 24/7 SOC will improve our overall security posture by providing constant vigilance and proactive threat hunting. This means that our security team can identify and mitigate

threats before they escalate into major incidents. The continuous operation also allows for better trend analysis and threat intelligence gathering, enabling us to stay ahead of emerging threats and adapt our defences accordingly.

Further developing user security awareness and embedding cybersecurity training into everyday training is of crucial importance for the Courts Service to safeguard its digital infrastructure and sensitive data. As cyber threats become increasingly sophisticated, it is vital that all staff members are equipped with the knowledge and skills to recognise and respond to potential security risks. We will create and launch a mandatory cyber security training regime to build towards a higher baseline of staff understanding. These initiatives will help create a culture of security awareness, such that that every staff member understands their role in protecting the organisation's data.

We will align with the second EU Network and Information Security Directive ("NIS 2") standards and will conduct a gap analysis and review to validate our cybersecurity measures against the latest regulatory requirements. This approach will help us to identify areas where our current practices may fall short and develop a roadmap to delivering remedial actions, thereby mitigating potential risks and enhancing our resilience against cyber threats.

Furthermore, we will continue to review, expand, and mature our Information Security Management System policies, standards, and procedures where appropriate. For example, we will continue to monitor the usage of Artificial Intelligence within the Courts Service against our established GenAI security standard, which we will adapt and update as necessary to enable us to leverage its benefits in a responsible and effective manner, while still safeguarding sensitive data.

Operations & Awareness Actions

ACTION 58: Build a 24/7 Security Operations Centre. This will allow us to have faster and more consistent responses to threats.

ACTION 59: Expand our security training to make our staff more aware of dangers. This training will become mandatory.

ACTION 60: Align with the "NIS 2" EU security standard. This will be done by checking for gaps in our current setup against the standard and making improvements where needed.

ACTION 61: Continue to review and mature our Information Security Management System. This system is made up of policies, standards, and procedures. The system will be improved where gaps are found through reviews.

Culture

Context

As has been discussed in previously, the prior strategy period saw progress made with the Courts Service's Digital Transformation, expanding the range of digital services we offer to both internal and external users. Throughout this period of change, the Courts Service has had a strong culture of speed, agility and collaboration in order to drive the necessary digital and technical innovation and change. In the coming years, as we transition into the "optimise" phase of the modernisation programme, we need to ensure that our core cultural building blocks adapt as needed to better support the sustainable delivery of the programme's long-term vision, through improved ways of working and the cultivation of an internal culture of standardisation, automation, and repeatability.

It is essential that we apply these principles against the delivery of our digital services, refining and maturing our ways of working in this area to enable greater automation, repeatability, and management of service quality. Though we have delivered numerous changes and new systems as part of the modernisation programme, we are conscious that effective collaboration, communications and engagement is also critical to the success of those changes and systems, in order to realise their business benefits.

Through the enhancement of the capacity and capabilities of ICT, we can ensure that we are well positioned to handle the future requirements of the modernisation programme. By providing staff with resources for continued professional development, and opportunities to collaborate with and learn from internal and external colleagues, we can be confident that these capabilities will improve over time.

Through these focused efforts on maturing our ways of working and enhancing collaboration and learning, we are committed to sustaining the momentum of our digital transformation and achieving long-term success.

Accordingly, the areas of focus for the Culture theme are:

A. **Maturing our Ways of Working**

B. **Collaboration & Learning**

Focus Area | Maturing Our Ways of Working

As we continue our digital transformation and further extend our range of available ICT related services, we need to ensure that our ways of working are optimised and refined to effectively deliver these services at scale. The core foundational elements of digital transformation required a flexible, and occasionally high-intensity style of working. However, we must now transition to an operating model which places more emphasis and focus on automation, and on predictable and repeatable processes.

To make this possible, our approach to internal ICT process design and the methodologies we employ will see a renewed focus on the reduction of manual processes wherever possible, minimising process friction and improving operational efficiency. By further developing our culture of internal automation, we can ultimately lead to greater repeatability, predictability, and consistency of outcomes of our services.

In parallel, we will be implementing a more comprehensive and systematic approach to quality assurance of the services we provide, with the goal of introducing greater levels of test and deployment automation. This will deliver multiple benefits, such as freeing up ICT staff time for more valuable activities, greater reliability of systems, and greater confidence in the quality of our releases. However, the most significant benefit is that higher-quality releases will engender higher levels of trust in our systems, and by extension, the Courts Service and the Courts.

Lastly, we will continue to review and balance the pressures of the digital transformation and modernisation programme, the appetite for change, and the introduction of new services against the sustainability of delivering on these expectations over the long term. With careful consideration given to the sustainability of our Ways of Working we can ensure the longevity and effectiveness of our initiatives while maintaining a healthy and productive working environment.

Maturing Our Ways of Working Actions

ACTION 62: Internal ICT processes will include more automation moving forward. This automation will allow for faster and more consistent results. This will also make it easier to track and fix issues with ICT processes.

ACTION 63: Improve how ICT tests new systems and updates by using more automated tools. This will make our work faster, more consistent, and more reliable, building trust in our systems and services.

ACTION 64: New services and updates will be delivered in a sustainable way. This will be done by balancing the pressures from change with the goals of the organisation.

Focus Area | **Collaboration & Learning**

With the ongoing changes brought by digital transformation through the Modernisation Programme, it is crucial that we are able to work effectively with both internal and external parties to achieve the best possible outcomes when implementing changes or addressing issues. This culture of collaboration will be central to our change management approach, aiding in achieving greater levels of trust with both our internal and external users of ICT related services. By working openly and transparently with staff, the judiciary, other IT teams, justice sector partners, public sector bodies, and advocacy groups, we can continue to build this trust while delivering services and solutions that are designed "for and with our users", as set out in the Better Public Services (2023) strategy. This culture of co-creation is key to the continuous improvement programme called out in the Quality of Service theme and must be at the heart of our engagements.

We must also consider and address the current and future demands for the Courts through the ongoing provision of continued professional development for our ICT staff in order to invest in our own future. The benefits delivered by this ongoing professional development will be further bolstered, where appropriate, by the continued application of agile methodologies, such as blended teams of both internal and external sources, in order to supplement our ICT capacity and readiness.

We also commit to an ongoing culture of innovation, ensuring that emerging technologies are top of mind to solve business and/or ICT challenges. Should a new technology be identified that has the potential to improve either internal Courts Service operations or external service delivery, we will assess for suitability through proof-of-concepts and trial programmes once it has reached a suitable level of maturity, reliability, and security. This forward-looking approach ensures that we are aware of new technologies of significant impact and are in a position to implement them.

Collaboration & Learning Actions

ACTION 65: ICT will continue to work closely with our stakeholders. This will be done in an open way to deliver and develop its services. These stakeholders are both internal and external to the Courts and Courts Service.

ACTION 66: To help play their part in delivering on the Courts Service's "Digital First" goal, ICT staff will be offered training as needed. We will also continue to work using blended and agile teams.

ACTION 67: Take a forward-looking approach to new technologies such as AI. These will be assessed to see how we can use them to make our services better. Proof of concepts will be used and will cover areas such as automated courtroom transcripts and translations.

4. APPENDIX

APPENDIX

Action Summary

Theme	Focus Area	#	Action
Quality of Service	Service Delivery Model	1	Create a single model for the delivery of all ICT, Digital and Data services. Through this we will understand our services better. We will use this model to improve our services incrementally.
Quality of Service	Service Delivery Model	2	Extend our service catalogue. Add criteria that are concise and can be measured. This will support the new service delivery model.
Quality of Service	Service Delivery Model	3	Introduce new measuring tools for devices, courts.ie, case management systems, data reports, etc. These tools will allow us to use data to improve our services.
Quality of Service	Service Delivery Model	4	Use the service catalogue to detect and fix issues with our services. Doing this in a systematic way will support us to improve the quality of our services.
Quality of Service	Adoption	5	Create a new Digital Adoption and Fluency team. The team will help users learn new technology skills generally. The team will also support technology adoption making sure it is having the desired impact.
Quality of Service	Adoption	6	Optimise the use of technology in courtrooms. We will work with colleagues to explore its use in different case types and scenarios.
Quality of Service	Adoption	7	Support judges to adopt new technology. This will be done though proactive engagements, training, and through tailored tools (e.g. digital dictation).
Quality of Service	Learning & Development	8	Support staff and judges with ICT skills development. This will be through multiple modes such as webinars, drop-in clinics, e-modules, in-person sessions, etc.
Quality of Service	Learning & Development	9	Help build a data-driven culture through tailored data training for staff and judges.
Quality of Service	Learning & Development	10	Create training courses for UCMS working with the Courts Service's Learning and Development team.
Quality of Service	Accessibility & Ease of Use	11	We commit to the equitable and inclusive delivery of services, as per the Courts Service Public Sector Duty Action Plan 2024-2027. This is in alignment with the requirements set out in Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Act 2014.
Quality of Service	Accessibility & Ease of Use	12	We will rebuild our courts.ie website to make it simple, clear and easy for everyone to use. The website will work well on phones, tablets, and computers. The new website will score over 90% in the National Disability Authority Accessibility Score (top 10% of public body websites). The site will achieve a Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 level of "AA" and have a significantly lowered reading age.
Quality of Service	Accessibility & Ease of Use	13	We will work to add new and creative ways to make our services easier for people to use. This includes things like the hearing devices we have already added in courtrooms and the option to attend court remotely from another location.
Quality of Service	Accessibility & Ease of Use	14	We will continue to use inclusive practices to design our services, following the Government's Design Principles. We will also test new ideas and ask for feedback from staff, judges, and the public to make sure our services meet everyone's needs.
Quality of Service	ICT Support Model	15	We will review how we provide ICT support to improve it. The review will include new systems like UCMS and UCMS Portal, the extra support provided for new services, the new support model for judges. We will review how to

			provide the same support level no matter where people are located. This will align with our organisation's plan to improve customer support for everyone.
Digital	UCMS	16	Expand the unified case management system for civil and family. This will include the rest of the civil and family offices.
Digital	UCMS	17	Launch the unified case management system for crime. This will include the digitisation of the court's legal aid process.
Digital	UCMS Portal	18	Launch an online portal for the unified case management system. This will be underpinned by new Digital Court Rules. We will grow the number of case types supported by the portal over time.
Digital	UCMS Portal	19	Add support for e-bundles to the portal. This will allow the management of all court documents digitally.
Digital	UCMS Portal	20	Explore a proof of concept to enable online Call Over processes.
Digital	UCMS Judiciary	21	Launch a judicial portal for the unified case management system. This will give access to key information like case summaries, documents, and court lists. It will also allow judges to view and add notes to documents.
Digital	UCMS Web Integrations	22	Expand and automate a new Legal Diary. It will cover all cases tracked by the unified case management system.
Digital	UCMS Web Integrations	23	There are many online court registers such as the Bankruptcy Register or the Licensing Register. Make our case management system drive the online court registers.
Digital	Other Integrations & Supports	24	Integrate the unified case management system with other key systems. These include for example courtroom and financial systems. Invest in tools such as the appointments booking system and data sharing with other Irish bodies and EU member states.
Technology	Courtroom Technology	25	Create a refresh strategy for our courtroom technology. This will protect our investment in this area. It will also ensure it is on a sustainable footing balancing budget against evolving needs.
Technology	Courtroom Technology	26	Create a reference architecture for the technology that is in our courtrooms. This will combine all elements, including sound. It will support a coherent ecosystem in our courtrooms.
Technology	Courtroom Technology	27	Centralise the management of courtroom sound systems. This will move us away from the current fragmented support arrangements. It will also introduce a single point of support for all courtroom technology. This will be paired with a gradual equipment upgrade to improve the audio experience for courtroom users.
Technology	Courtroom Technology	28	Modernise the digital audio recording system in courtrooms. This will improve the ergonomic setup for registrars. It will make the system more reliable and secure. It will allow it to work with the new unified case management system.
Technology	Courtroom Technology	29	Continue to improve our remote court platform. This will be through either improvement or replacement.
Technology	End-User Technology	30	Put in place a refresh strategy for end-user technology and start its implementation. This will include deciding when to move to Windows 11.
Technology	End-User Technology	31	Move from our current phone system to a modern one that works on desktop and laptops. This will make it easier to make and receive office land line calls from any location. This will also help fix the differences in how phone auto-attendants work across offices.
Technology	End-User Technology	32	Redesign and refresh our printing hardware. This will be coupled with increasing the number of printers with scanning in courtrooms.
Technology	End-User Technology	33	Explore how cloud technology can support us to be more cost effective, agile and secure. This will be paired with automation and using cloud best practices, for example, infrastructure as code.
Technology	Infrastructure Technology	34	Put in place a refresh strategy for infrastructure technology that is aligned with the budget. Once in place, start implementing it.
Technology	Infrastructure Technology	35	Carry out a major countrywide network upgrade programme, "Network 2.0", to improve both the security of our network and to increase its performance.
Technology	Infrastructure Technology	36	Start a network expansion programme. This will add more court venues to the Courts Service network.
Technology	Infrastructure Technology	37	Finish the rollout of Wi-Fi across all of the Courts Service estate.

Technology	Infrastructure Technology	38	Support the design and build of the upcoming Hammond Lane Family Courts complex, and other new venues, as needed.
Data	Data Quality	39	Improve the data quality programme within the Courts Service. This will be done by creating data quality reports to measure data quality. These will be paired with a defined remediation process.
Data	Data Quality	40	Further develop the data lake as the verified and trusted 'single source of truth'. Add more datasets to the lake from which reports can be built. Continue to update the data dictionary to track agreed metric definitions.
Data	Data Quality	41	Create trusted common data registries for both internal and external use. For example, this will include a common set of offence codes for crime across the justice sector. This work will be done in collaboration with justice sector partners.
Data	Use of Data	42	Create a suite of role-based guides on the use of data. This will be used to train staff on what to do with the data that is available to them. This will help improve process consistency, improve data quality, and improve decision-making.
Data	Use of Data	43	Create and share more reports with staff and judges. These reports will show key activities and high-level metrics to support making decisions.
Data	Use of Data	44	Create more interactive data dashboards. These dashboards will focus on the detailed analysis of data and trends about a specific area or topic.
Data	Use of Data	45	Add HR, finance, estate, and learning data to our data lake. This will allow us to build dashboards combining this data with court activity data for deeper insights.
Data	Use of Data	46	Expand our Open Data Portal by identifying appropriate datasets to add to it. This will increase transparency and help to build trust.
Data	Governance and Improved Processes	47	Improve our records management processes to support compliance with data retention law. This will be done in offices with the help of the Data Unit through data retention advice and tools.
Data	Governance and Improved Processes	48	Add more data policies and procedures and create a catalogue to share them. This will help people know about them, follow them, and complete any needed training.
Data	Governance and Improved Processes	49	Carry out a data maturity review at the end of this period. This will allow us to measure the progress made.
Data	Governance and Improved Processes	50	We will upgrade to a modern system for sharing data, making it easier to manage and oversee. This will include a clear process for keeping track of data that is being shared in and out of the Courts Service.
Data	Governance and Improved Processes	51	Share more data using the Hub. This will replace slow and error prone manual paper sharing with digital sharing. The Hub is a secure system run by the Department of Justice for sharing crime data.
Data	Governance and Improved Processes	52	Improve the data gathering process for creating data reports. The aim is to automate as much as possible and reduce manual data entry.
Data	Data Technology	53	Roll out an Electronic Document Management System. this will allow us to better store, track, manage, edit and share documents.
Security	Network & Resilience	54	Improve security posture of the Courts Service, through a redesign as part of Network 2.0 initiative following Secure-by-Design best practices.
Security	Network & Resilience	55	Make our disaster recovery processes stronger by the introduction of VXLAN. This will help protect our systems and data.
Security	Network & Resilience	56	Create technical recovery plans for our systems in order of importance. This will ensure that we widely know how to restore our systems.
Security	Network & Resilience	57	Continue to test and improve the Disaster Recovery processes and set up for all our systems.
Security	Operations & Awareness	58	Build a 24/7 Security Operations Centre. This will allow us to have faster and more consistent responses to threats.
Security	Operations & Awareness	59	Expand our security training to make our staff more aware of dangers. This training will become mandatory.
Security	Operations & Awareness	60	Align with the "NIS 2" EU security standard. This will be done by checking for gaps in our current setup against the standard and making improvements where needed.

Security	Operations & Awareness	61	Continue to review and mature our Information Security Management System. This system is made up of policies, standards, and procedures. The system will be improved where gaps are found through reviews.
Culture	Maturing Our Ways of Working	62	Internal ICT processes will include more automation moving forward. This automation will allow for faster and more consistent results. This will also make it easier to track and fix issues with ICT processes.
Culture	Maturing Our Ways of Working	63	Improve how ICT tests new systems and updates by using more automated tools. This will make our work faster, more consistent, and more reliable, building trust in our systems and services.
Culture	Maturing Our Ways of Working	64	New services and updates will be delivered in a sustainable way. This will be done by balancing the pressures from change with the goals of the organisation.
Culture	Collaboration & Learning	65	ICT will continue to work closely with our stakeholders. This will be done in an open way to deliver and develop its services. These stakeholders are both internal and external to the Courts and Courts Service.
Culture	Collaboration & Learning	66	To help play their part in delivering on the Courts Service's "Digital First" goal, ICT staff will be offered training as needed. We will also continue to work using blended and agile teams.
Culture	Collaboration & Learning	67	Take a forward-looking approach to new technologies such as AI. These will be assessed to see how we can use them to make our services better. Proof of concepts will be used and will cover areas such as automated courtroom transcripts and translations.

Prior Strategy 2021–2024 Action Summary

#	Action	Status
Theme	**Court Technology**	
1	Provide a standardised minimum set of technology in all technology-enabled courtrooms	Fully Achieved
2	Expand video installations in courtrooms countrywide aligned with the forthcoming Estate Strategy and Venue Review, and work with the judiciary, registrars and Justice sector bodies to increase their utility.	Fully Achieved
3	Improve the remote court platform to leverage the latest available technology and innovation in video conferencing and integrate with digital case management tools.	Partially Achieved
4	Assess and enhance connectivity, coverage, operating model of the Wi-Fi solution to ensure it is fit for purpose for the judiciary, staff, legal practitioners and justice partners.	Fully Achieved
5	Refresh Digital Audio Recordings (DAR) technology estate, improving its integration with the remote court platform, case management platform, reviewing access control to courtroom audio and investigating improvements to the speech-to-text capability leveraging AI.	Not Achieved
6	Evolve interaction with cases while in-court, reducing reliance on paper through an integrated and unified case management platform.	Partially Achieved
7	Ensure the use of court technology in an inclusive and accessible manner, following universal design principles.	Fully Achieved
Theme	**Unified Case Management System**	
8	Introduce a single digital case management system to create a consistent user-centred experience throughout case management and rationalise Courts Service processes and procedures.	Fully Achieved

9	Incrementally implement family, civil and criminal cases into the case management platform aligned with the prioritisation of the Modernisation Programme.	Fully Achieved
10	Implement a modern portal for practitioners and litigants to create and track case applications online, helping manage scheduling and deadlines, and communication between practitioners and litigants.	Partially Achieved
11	Expand number of case types that can be initiated via online portal.	Not Achieved
12	Incrementally streamline case management workload for case types within the new platform through a series of systems integration.	Not Achieved
13	Develop a series of reusable digital modules that can be leveraged as new case types are rolled out in the new platform.	Fully Achieved
14	Modernise document management, aligning with the Data strategy, making it easy to access, share, store and annotate documents.	Partially Achieved
Theme	**Desktop & Infrastructure Modernisation**	
15	Introduce modern collaboration and communication tools, retiring legacy messaging tools to enable the use of more robust, modern, and secure document, mail and video conferencing solutions.	Fully Achieved
16	Adopt the OGCIO's Build to Share programme and work towards the integration of eDocs and other solutions to aid document collaboration and process streamlining within the Courts Service.	Fully Achieved
17	Replace Citrix Virtualisation software and thin client workstations with PCs/laptops.	Fully Achieved
18	Roll-out a tested desktop configuration to ensure Courts Service staff have access to equipment and ergonomic best practices.	Fully Achieved
19	Introduce an enterprise ready Mobile Device Management (MDM) solution to ensure the ability to remotely manage and wipe devices, and support ICT users.	Fully Achieved
20	Introduce improvements to the judicial desktop including modern email and collaboration tooling.	Fully Achieved
21	Establish a judicial ICT training programme to support judicial staff and establish an ICT support channel for aftercare of issues experienced.	Partially Achieved
22	Complete an assessment of the current operating system and application-level software versions and upgrade or retire unsupportable versions where possible.	Partially Achieved
23	Review and refresh our corporate support systems in line with demand and organisational priorities.	Fully Achieved
24	Implement and enable "Infrastructure as Code" to modernise infrastructure provisioning and management, and reduce the requirement for manual tasks.	Partially Achieved
25	Review the current service catalogue and assess where the use of cloud technologies could be used to increase the security and agility of the organisation.	Fully Achieved
Theme	**Security**	
26	Continued development of a Cyber Security Incident Response Plan (CSIRP) in line with public sector best practices to ensure issues are detected and responded to in the event of a breach.	Fully Achieved
27	Implement a cybersecurity governance model which incorporates risk-focussed decision making to provide strategic direction of security initiatives.	Fully Achieved
28	Complete an ISO27001 fit-gap analysis and Cyber Security Simulation to identify and inform governance and technical improvements.	Fully Achieved
29	Rationalisation and implementation of single Identity and Access Management (IAM).	Fully Achieved
30	Investigate advancements in security tooling in areas such as Threat Intelligence (TI) and Vulnerability Management (VM).	Fully Achieved
31	Implementation of vulnerability detection and threat detection capabilities to help identify and neutralise a vulnerability before systems are exposed to bad actors.	Fully Achieved
32	Adoption of a Security Information and Event Management (SIEM) platform.	Fully Achieved

33	Aligning with the Business Continuity Programme, carry out a Disaster Recovery assessment and put in place an appropriate remedial programme of work to improve our BCP and DR posture.	Fully Achieved
34	Develop and issue a user security awareness programme to raise awareness of the responsibilities around securing networks, devices, and information.	Fully Achieved
Theme	**Capacity, Capability, and Governance**	
35	Structure the ICT Directorate to align with business needs.	Fully Achieved
36	Introduce modern agile ways of working to transform ICT into a first-class citizen of the business.	Fully Achieved
37	Meet capacity needs through blended, multi-disciplinary teams, and uplift capability of ICT staff through a series of learning initiatives.	Fully Achieved
38	Work with Learning and Development to uplift the capability of the organisation to get the most out of current and new technology.	Partially Achieved
39	Refine the vendor management strategy to support internal capability and delivery through blended teams.	Fully Achieved
40	Define, implement and roll out a unified governance framework to support transformation.	Fully Achieved
41	Mature change, support and learning services, in partnership with Change Programme Office (CPO) and Learning & Development (L&D).	Fully Achieved
Theme	**Data as an Enabler**	
42.01	Establish a Data Governance Committee with oversight of the Courts Service's data management and information security matters.	Fully Achieved
42.02	Assess progress made in improving data management processes to a target level of three by conducting a further data maturity assessment during the term of this Data Strategy.	Fully Achieved
42.03	Develop and roll-out a data quality framework.	Partially Achieved
42.04	Conduct a gap assessment of the data and metric dictionary to identify the required improvement initiatives.	Fully Achieved
42.05	Establish a Business Intelligence service to centrally manage data demand.	Fully Achieved
42.06	Develop and mature a coherent data architecture including a unified data model, a data exchange architecture and a data lake.	Fully Achieved
42.07	Establish a Technical Architecture Design Authority (TADA) to review key architectural choices to ensure proposed developments adopt a coherent, consistent and joined up data architecture.	Fully Achieved
42.08	Develop and operationalise a data catalogue for Courts Service data holdings	Fully Achieved
42.09	Actively maintain the Court Service data holdings on the Public Service Data Catalogue.	Fully Achieved
42.10	Examine opportunities where trusted common identifiers may be used to improve both the efficiency and effectiveness of operational processes, and the level of data insights available.	Partially Achieved
42.11	Establish a Courts Service Open Data Portal that provides access to a data bank of pre-validated high priority datasets.	Fully Achieved
42.12	Identify potential datasets that can be published on the Courts Service Open Data Portal.	Fully Achieved
42.13	Expand the number of application datasets and standardised reports available from the data lake.	Fully Achieved
42.14	Develop and execute a communications strategy to raise awareness of the data lake and support its adoption.	Fully Achieved

42.15	ICT Directorate to work in partnership with CPO and Learning & Development Unit to identify and deliver data related training initiatives.	Partially Achieved
42.16	Define and implement an organisation wide records management policy, including a data retention schedule.	Fully Achieved
42.17	Continued engagement with the National Archives of Ireland to operationalise a robust archival system for appropriate records.	Fully Achieved
42.18	Continue to review, develop and raise awareness of policies, standards and processes that support data privacy and security.	Fully Achieved
42.19	Move to a default position where regular data sharing with PSBs and approved third parties is via APIs and message broker infrastructure.	Partially Achieved
42.20	Maintain a set of data sharing artefacts, including a central register of all APIs in use, data sharing agreements, etc.	Fully Achieved
42.21	Implement an Electronic Document and Records Management System for case data	Fully Achieved
42.22	Implement an Electronic Document and Records Management System for the Courts Service's organisation data.	Not Achieved
42.23	Promote and provide access to BI tooling and data dashboards that provide insights relevant to the role of users	Fully Achieved